

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00

RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-10 SCI-06

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO DEA HQS WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4983

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS NAR (TH)

SUBJECT: OPIUM SEIZURE, THAILAND

DEA HQS PASS DURKIN/EN:BELK/IND FROM DICK

REF LOU BANGKOK 10674

1. ON JULY 2, 1973 RTG CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION (CID) AND THE BORAD OF INSPECTION AND FOLLOW-UP OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS (BIFGO) PASSED INFORMATION TO THE NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION CENTER (NSC) IN BANGKOK CONCERNING AS ALLEGED CACHE OF SOME FOUR(4) TONS OF OPIUM AND 180 KILOS OF MORPHINE BASE SECRETED IN THE VICINITY OF CHUMPHON, A TOWN ON THE EASTERN COAST OF THE GULF OF THAILAND.

2. THE NSC REQUESTED DEA ASSISTANCE IN EXPLOITING THIS INFORMATION, ON JULY 1, 1973 A BRO AGENT ACCOMPANIED NSC OFFICERS AND CID TO CHUMPHON, WHILE THERE, THE THAI POLICE SPORTED LU PING KHIA, (0712/3521/0163) LAN HU NAN (5663/327/0589) AKA VIVAT NAIMYOMDUL AND USOM ASAWAITHIWATANA, ONCE THEY WERE SEEN THE THREE SUSPECTS HURRIEDLY RETURNED TO BANGKOK, NSC SUBSEQUENTLY DEVELOPED INFORMATION THAT

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THE THREE SUSPECTS WERE IN CHUMPHON IN CONNECTION WITH AN

OPIUM SHIPMENT DESIGNATED FOR HONG KONG VIA THAI TRAWLER. REPORTEDLY, THE THREE SUSPECTS PAID A THAI NATIONAL, JOHN DOE AKA SOM 100,000 BAHT (APPROXIMATELY \$5,000 U.S.) TO LOAN AND SHIP A REPORTED 4 TONS OF OPIUM TO HONG KONG. SOM WAS TO HAVE PAID THIS MONEY TO A TRAWLER CREW BUT DID NOT. AT THAT TIME THE OPIUM WAS BURIED ON AN ISLAND IN THE VICINITY OF CHUMPHON. WHEN THE TRAWLER CREW REALIZED THEY WERE NOT GOING TO RECEIVE THIS MONEY THEY UNILATERALLY RELOCATED THE OPIUM CACHE TO THONGTHANGT HAENG ISLAND. ON JULY 2, NSC OFFICERS DISCOVERED THE FIRST LOCATION BUT FOUND NO OPIUM. THEY LEARNED THAT THE THREE SUSPECTS WERE ACTUALLY IN CHUMPHON OFFERING AN ADDITIONAL 100,000 BAHT TO ANYONE WHO WOULD DISCLOSE THE SITE OF THE HIDDEN OPIUM.

3. NSC OFFICERS PRESENTED THE FOREGOING INFORMATION TO THE RTG CABINET AND NAMED THE THREE SUSPECTS AS APPARENTLY INVOLVED IN LARGE SCALE OPIUM TRAFFICKING. THE CABINET SUBSEQUENTLY AUTHORIZED THE ARREST OF THE THREE AND THEY WERE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY ON JULY 10, 1973 AS REPORTED IN REFTTEL. NSC AND DEA WERE CONVINCED THAT THE OPIUM REMAINED HIDDEN IN THE CHUMPHON AREA. THE WORD WAS CIRCULATED THAT A REWARD OF 100,000 BAHT WOULD BE PAID TO ANYONE WHO WOULD DISCLOSE THE CACHE LOCATION.

4. ON JULY 20, 1973 THAI MARINE POLICE LOCATED AN ASSET WHO AGREED TO COOPERATE. ON JULY 22, 1973 AT 0100 HOURS NSC, THAI MARINE POLICE AND DEA LOCATED SEVENTY-FOUR (74) BURLAP SACKS OF RAW OPIUM AND SEIZED APPROXIMATELY 2,520 KILOGRAMS. THIS SEIZURE WAS MADE IN A CAVE ON AN ISLAND LOCATED ON AN ISLAND SOME FIFTY-TWO (52) MILES FROM THE FIRST SEARCHED AREA.

5. NO ARRESTS WERE MADE AT THE CAVE SITE AS THE CACHE WAS UNATTENDED. THIS SEIZURE SHOULD SERVE TO SUBSTANTIATE THE CHARGES OUTSTANDING AGAINST LU PING KHIA, ET AL.

6. WE BELIEVE THIS SUCCESS IS A FURTHER INDICATION OF RTG INTENTIONS TO SUPPRESS THE TRAWLER TRAFFIC WHICH HAS PLAGUED THIS COUNTRY FOR MANY YEARS.
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